

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 139673

FOLLOWING REPEAT LUSAKA 1910 SENT ACTION SECSTATE LONDON
INFO CAPE TOWN DAR ES SALAAM GABORONE MAPUTO PRETORIA USUN
MAY 30.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 1910

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV RH US UK

SUBJ: RHODESIA: CHONA COMMENTS

1. IN A CONVERSATION ON MAY 29 LARGELY DEVOTED TO NAMIBIA,
MARK CHONA MADE A NUMBER OF COMMENTS ON THE RHODESIA SITUATION
TO AMBASSADORS MCHENRY AND LOW.

2. CHONA SAID THAT HE AND PRESIDENT KAUNDA NOW REALIZE THAT
THEY SHOULD HAVE BROUGHT MALAWI PRESIDENT HASTINGS BANDA INTO
THE PICTURE EARLIER. THEY RECOGNIZED THAT BANDA HAS CONSIDERABLE
INFLUENCE OVER SITHOLE AND THAT HE COULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN
ADVANCING OUR INTERESTS. LOW REMINDED CHONA THAT WE HAD SUGGESTED
LAST YEAR THAT WE CONSULT WITH BANDA BUT PRESIDENT KAUNDA HAD
ADVISED US AGAINST IT. LOW WONDERED WHETHER IT WOULD NOT BE
A GOOD IDEA FOR GRAHAM AND HIM TO STOP IN BLANTYRE AFTER OUR
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FIRST VISIT TO SALISBURY IN ORDER
TO BRIEF BANDA AND DISCUSS
THE SITUATION WITH HIM. CHONA ENTHUSIASTICALLY AGREED WITH
THE SUGGESTION. LONDON MAY WISH TO MENTION THIS TO JOHNNY GRAHAM.

3. CHONA DESCRIBED RECENT CONTACTS IN LONDON WHICH HAD APPARENT-
LY TAKEN PLACE BETWEEN NDABANINGI SITHOLE AND THE ZAMBIAN HIGH

COMMISSION. SITHOLE HAD GIVEN THE HIGH COMMISSION THE DEFINITE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS DISSATISFIED AND UNHAPPY WITH EVENTS IN SALISBURY. HE HAD COME TO LONDON TO MEET WITH NIGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER GARBA BUT HAD APPARENTLY RETURNED TO SALISBURY BEFORE GARBA ARRIVED, LEAVING HIS MINISTERS THERE (INCLUDING DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS). HE HAD ASKED WHETHER PRESIDENT KAUNDA WOULD RECEIVE HIM IF HE CAME TO LUSAKA. THE ZAMBIANS HAD REPLIED THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT SUCH A VISIT ONLY AFTER SITHOLE HAD COMPLETED HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH GARBA AND IF HE WAS PREPARED TO MOVE ALONG WITH US TOWARDS AN ALL PARTIES MEETING.

4. THOUGH CHONA FELT SITHOLE WAS NOT CERTAIN IN HIS MIND WHERE TO GO FROM HERE, HE SEEMED TO BE SEARCHING FOR SOME REASON OR INCIDENT TO CAUSE A BREAK WITH SMITH. THE ZAMBIANS HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT SITHOLE WAS RETURNING TO SALISBURY TO FIND SUCH AN INCIDENT, AND THAT IT WOULD LIKELY BE IN THE AREA OF LAND REFORM THAT HE WOULD CHALLENGE SMITH; AN AREA WHICH ALL KNEW SMITH WOULD NOT GIVE ON.

5. COMMENTING ON SOVIETS' ATTITUDES, CHONA SAID THAT THOUGH HE DID NOT KNOW THEIR VIEWS ON NAMIBIA, HE WAS QUITE CERTAIN THAT THEY WERE NOW PREPARED TO ACCEPT A SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA. THEY MAY PREPARE THAT THIS TAKE PLACE AFTER A FEW MORE MONTHS OF FIGHTING BUT THEY WOULD NOT STAND IN THE WAY OF A SETTLEMENT IF PROGRESS COULD BE MADE TOWARDS IT.

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6. CHONA SEEMED TO BE SATISFIED WITH THE REPORTS HE RECEIVED OF SITHOLE'S CONVERSATION WITH BOTH FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN AND MALAWI PRESIDENT BANDA. HE SAID THAT OWEN HAD BEEN TIGHT ON SITHOLE AND GIVEN HIM LITTLE COMFORT WHILE BANDA HAD ADVISED SITHOLE TO ACCEPT AN ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE.

7. COMMENT: CHONA'S ATTITUDE CONTINUES TO BE POSITIVE TOWARDS OUR EFFORTS AND ZAMBIA'S COLLABORATION IN SUPPORTING THEM. HE IMPLIED IN EVERYTHING HE SAID THAT WE WERE BOTH WORKING TOWARD THE SAME ENDS OF BRINGING ALL THE PARTIES TOGETHER. HE WAS COMPLIMENTARY TOWARDS SITHOLE, GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS EVERY POSSIBILITY THAT COOPERATION WITH HIM WAS POSSIBLE. HE SEEMED TO RECOGNIZE THAT SUCH COOPERATION COULD LEAD TO AN EVENTUAL SPLIT IN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WHICH HE APPEARED NEITHER TO SUPPORT NOR OPPOSE, THOUGH IT SHOULD BE AVOIDED FOR THE TIME BEING. LOW UNQUOTE VANCE

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